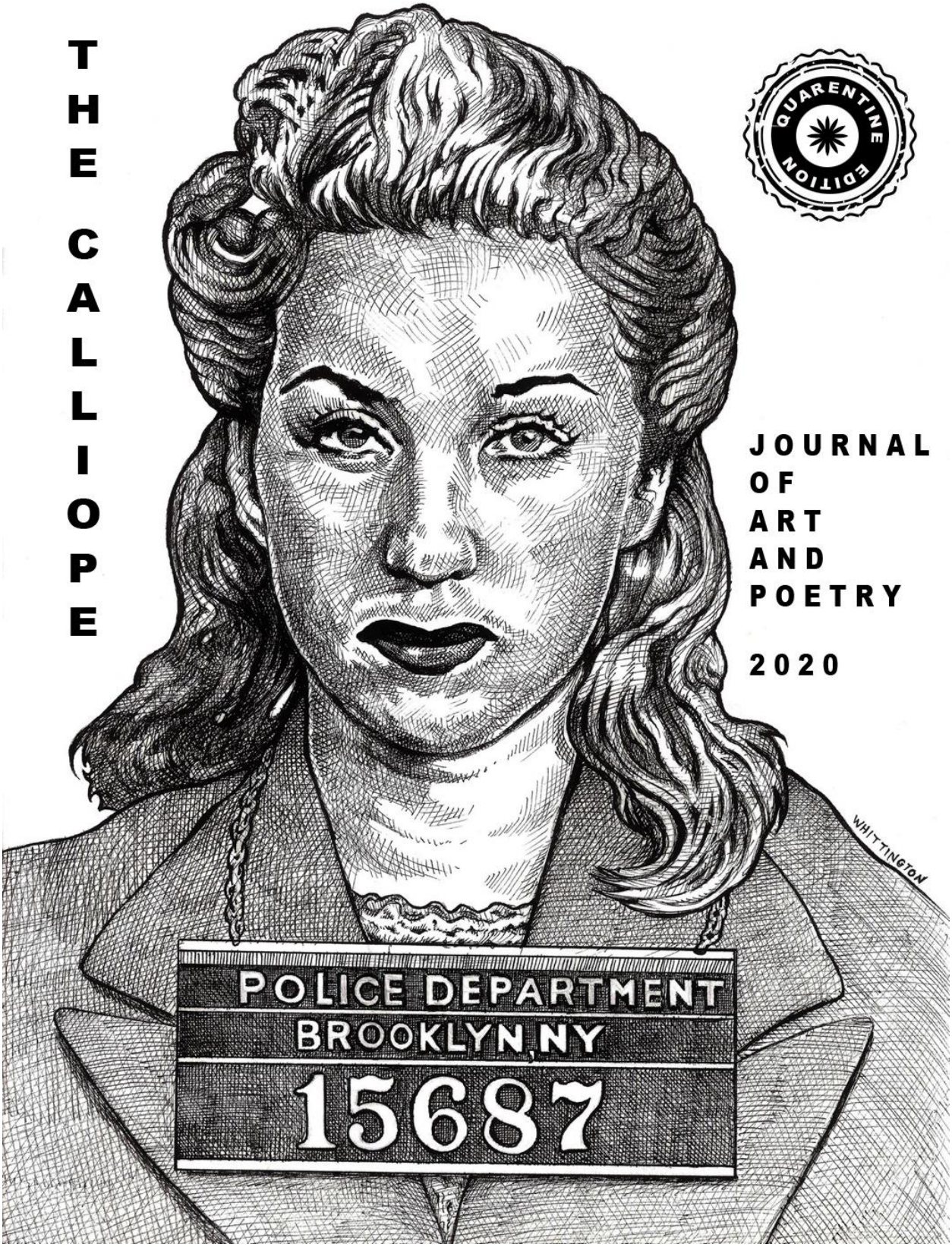
THE CALLIOPE



QUARENTINE EDITION

JOURNAL OF ART AND POETRY

2020

FOREWORD

As a publication, The Calliope has consistently generated support from administration, faculty, and students since its inception in 2012. It is a testament to the collaborative power of art and poetry, showcasing the rich wealth of talent inherent within our student body. In typical fashion, the poems are written first and then submitted to the Art Department for illustration. However, as life sometimes has a sense of humor when it comes to us humans making our plans, regrettably the semester was sidelined without notice. In the ensuing disarray, the creation of illustrations by our art students was made untenable. But in the spirit of perseverance, we want to press forward to acknowledge and celebrate the poetic contributions from our Spring 2020 writers. The full spirit of The Calliope will rise again soon! In the meantime, please enjoy the talents of these creative individuals. Who knows, I might humbly submit a few of my own illustrations for good measure. Special thanks goes out to Mr. Keith Morris without whose organizational skills and persistence this publication would not be possible.

Eric Shawn Whittington
July 2020

Editor and Illustrator: Eric Shawn Whittington
Poetry Editor: Keith Morris
Assistant Poetry Editors: Sarah Metcalfe, Anna Pounds, and Sarah Ware

Table of Contents

Milk for the Mona Lisa by Alfonzo Fernandez ……1

The Clocks Have Died by Mary-Elizabeth Moore ……...2

I'm Alright by Alex Pearson.……4

Stories by Briana Turner ……..6

An untitled poem by Pam Dankins ……..7

I Am Not Your God by Rayne Walker ...……..8

1:54 am by Emily Shaffer ..…….10

Empathy by Jay Biffle ..……..11

Cycles by Michael Cook …….13

Milk for the Mona Lisa

by

Alfonzo Fernandez, Fall 2019 Poetry Slam Winner

The lava boils up towards the brim, steaming with laughter that springs from your voice
Watching how you twitch every time we smoke; I recall the word as thwacked
Covering yourself in nostalgia as we reminisce
The stilts that propel you upwards lay contoured to the seat, uncomfortable it was
Laughing as if the well that kept you alive in the harsh winter seasons had frozen over
Only to be heard when the golden heat puts the daffodils to sleep
Knowing that you are the one who grew them, too, maybe to grow into a beautiful dandelion
With spines to protect itself from the hard-bitter world, a world groomed to hate instead of loving
Or am I just a world that harmed you without any thought as to why
I regret the way I have treated you in the life before, I cannot fathom a way to even spill
an explanation
But why stare at the milk running along the floorboard
I want you to know that I am here to clean up the milk we have both knocked over
After trying to arm wrestle unknowing of each other's strength
Beating me to death, after finding my weakness
It takes two to waltz, to create one intimate dance
Do not be afraid of stepping on my toes, I have learned this routine
Trust me, my friend, I will lead, just follow my feet
Easy squeezy, finding my humor to be just peachy
Just to be exact that the peach fuzz that glistens on your chin when you turn into the stars
Reminded me of the grass that lay underneath us that one night long ago
Sincerely apologizing for unearthing memories, we have stored away
Just like a film from an old movie, pictures to see and watching on the movie screen
Framing our favorites on our walls, trust me my friend that art you've left in my mind
Hangs from a ceiling, showing off to my guests as my most prized possession
Thank you for willing to heal the wounds I've left on your arms
Bandaging up the bloody scars I have received from our time in the dark
My dear friend or whatever may be, gracious to have open the doors to a new room
Filled with paintings we have yet to see

The Clocks Have Died

by

Mary-Elizabeth Moore

This house is old, and the air inside is cold,
From the cracks and holes in the walls.
Spider's webs coat the place like a fog.
Clouded windows are covered by blinds.
There's a creak when I step,
And a moan and whine.

There are papers on every surface, too.
The walls, the doors
The cabinets, the floor.
And they all have a message from the Good Book
By the big Man upstairs: "Never give up!"
They are in vain.

There's a curling card on the fridge,
Crudely drawn and chaotically colored,
It's the work of a child's hands.
Crafted with love for a day in June,
I have no doubt,
For the child's hands were mine.

It seems this house is untouched by time.
The scent is the same, so too the sounds.
And all the clocks have died.
The calendars have fallen behind,
I note.
Old, frayed, and they show one date.

The day it all ended,
The day it came to pass,
The day it all began.
It's still February, they say.
How sickening.
I now have an urge to leave.

WHITTINGTON

I’m Alright

By Alex Pearson

Long days, long nights, I have fights with myself.
My depression moves to new heights, keeps me crying every night.
I hope you never have to feel what it’s like to love somebody who loves somebody that’s not you.
No matter all the pain and all the rain, I have you.
So, if you ask if I’m ok, I’ll say… “I’m alright.”

FT WORTH, TEXAS
36902
MARCH 04 1964
WHITTINGTON

Stories

by

Briana Turner

I don’t want to be another
page in your book.
I want to be your greatest story—
the only story worth telling.
The heart-wrenching,
has you on the edge of your seat,
kind of story.
But, instead,
I am merely a page,
nothing worth talking about,
just a few simple words
with no meaning attached.

An untitled poem

by Pam Dankins

So why do I want to continue looking like a fool for you?
Why do I want to continue bawling my eyes out late at night over you?
Why do I want to continue letting my heart cry out for you knowing you won't listen?
Why do I want to continue pushing all the hurt within my body away only if it meant you'll stay?
I like to think it's because I love you.
I feel like I can openly cry,
I feel like I could dance with the rain,
I feel like I can soar high within the clouds,
I feel like I can shine with the stars as they watch over you at night,
I feel like I am surrounded by beauty like no other when I'm in your presence.
You like to think it's because I'm a burden.
You feel like you must close off your emotions,
You feel like I am the rain pouring down on your parade,
You feel like I am that cloud that won't stop hanging down over you,
You feel like I am that star you can't get close to because it'll only burn you,
You feel like I am that beauty that holds no beauty unless I see it through my eyes.
But isn't love considered a burden?

I Am Not Your God

by

Rayne Walker

Help me straighten pink bows
Pink silk in a small tight wad
Something I need you to know
I am not perfect, not your God

You call me perfect, you call me faith
Think I'm holy, godlike, on a pedestal
You'll come to see your mistake
Faith in me will soon turn you a fool

Time passes, my imprisonment grows
jail of perfection, expectations, pressure
I sit upon a wall of my growing woes
We both have sin, I'm not your savior

For a little while, we had our Eden
I can't imagine why you would leave
Ventured too far, you saw my sin
Now you know I'm not God, just Eve

Shattered, cracks to see inside
All the places to keep my shame
Imperfections, all my sins I hide
Adam, things will never be the same

You turned away from me when I fell
"You're not my God, gods don't fall"
A silhouette behind my black veil
"There never was a God for us at all"

63572
WHITTINGTON

1:54 am

by

Emily Shaffer

the room is filled with a black abyss.
as we lay here and i opened my heart, it’s as if your ears had become the bricks that built the walls between us. tears trickled down my cheek onto your back and you did not move. it was if my ache was normal to someone like you. silence grew between us like weeds grow between sidewalks cracks. the simple words “it’s okay” slowly crept from your mouth; like a sharp blade it cut our silence and for once i felt you had a heart. you rolled over and your arms became a blanket over me. i neglected to notice the tears falling down your face. my pain became yours and at that moment i felt whole. this is all simply to say, congratulations. you defeated the thought i created of you.

50301
WHITTINGTON

Empathy

by

Jay Biffle

I understand what you mean
When you say you feel like you can't breathe
I relate to you
When you say you don't know what you're doing anymore
You talk to me, or more accurately, you talk at me
You tell me your problems, your feelings, your doubts
And I understand
I sit there, listening intently, just how you want
And it doesn't matter what I think, it doesn't matter what I say
As long as I listen
And I understand and do as you like
Because I want someone to be listening and caring
Just as I am for you

Cycles

By
Michael Cook

Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter
Dawn, Noon, Dusk, Midnight
Get up, eat breakfast, and go on my way
Work ‘til the bell rings, and escape to my games

Listen to music, more Netflix to view
‘Til four hours of morning are left until dawn
Phone on the charger, roll over to sleep
Immediately the alarm decides to go *beep*

Again the next day, and the next, and the next
Living by paycheck, an emotional wreck
Denied another raise, frustration fills my days
Tick tock, all my time goes…

…until it ends in a ***BANG!***